

# Chesham United 1, Wycombe Wanderers 3 (a.e.t.)

DESPITE the appalling conditions this match lived up to its promise to provide 90 minutes entertainment. In fact The Meadow crowd, some 1,500 strong, got a 30-minute bonus as Chesham forced Wycombe into extra time to decide who should go into the final of the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup.

But despite the closeness of these two sides on the day, extra time showed Wycombe to be the fitter of the two and it was basically this fitness which brought them the two goals which carried them through to the final, writes Graham Pepper.

Now it is on the cards that Wycombe will meet Slough Town FC, who have yet to play Abingdon in the other semi-final, in the final again.

But for a tragic own goal by Dave LeSage at The Meadow on Saturday, it might well have been Chesham United going through to the final, although I think Wycombe would have scored even if LeSage had not done it for them.

The match was a credit to both sides, the skills of whom are both better suited to dryer conditions, for turning on a fine footballing exhibition on a pitch on which it would have been easier to keep your feet on had it been a skating rink.

Wycombe certainly dominated the first half while Chesham took the honours in the second, but neither side resorted to clogging tactics and both gave a fine exhibition of attacking football.

Dylan Evans had a heaven-sent opportunity to put the Blues ahead in the ninth minute but his low drive got bogged down in the glue patch in front of the Chesham goal and merely trickled into the grateful arms of Laurie Cole.

Chesham quickly struck back and Alf Cameron's overhead kick was not far wide of its mark after Roger Grimmond had won a mid-air duel with Kevin Raine in the Wycombe goal.

Alf Cameron and Ken Beaven can only stand and watch in a crowded goalmouth as Dave LeSage, masked by Les Burgess, beats Perrin to Holifield's cross, only to send the ball flashing into his own net. The one tragic error he made in a match in which the skills of he and Les Burgess often foiled the Wycombe attacks. Below Les Burgess makes a dramatic and successful appeal for offside as Larry Pritchard goes through on his own.



But it was Wycombe who came forward more, capitalising on a lot of Chesham's passes which went astray, and in the 21st minute their relentless pressure brought them a goal from a tragic error by Dave LeSage, his only one of the match.

The move started when Dylan Evans burst clear on the right and Ken Gregory was forced to bring him down near the corner flag. Mickey Holifield took the free kick and floated the ball over for Perrin in the middle. Dave LeSage outjumped his opponent but could only send the ball flashing into his own net, to the delight of the Wycombe supporters and his own mortification.

Laurie Cole demonstrated his skills five minutes later when he saved at point blank range from the feet of Larry Pritchard, who was ruled offside.

Chesham had a chance to equalise a minute later when the sheer persistence of Ken Beaven, who never gave up fighting throughout this match, won them a corner which Kevin Raine, deputising for the injured Maskell, misjudged com-

pletely, but none of the Chesham players could get a foot to it and Wycombe gratefully scrambled it away.

After the interval, Chesham came out determined to get an early equaliser and, within five minutes they had done just that with a beautifully taken goal from Roger Grimmond.

The move originated with the ever-running Ken Beaven who put Stewart Atkins away in the middle. Atkins carried the ball forward before switching it inside to Roger Grimmond. Grimmond looked to have held it too long as he bore down on Raine, but he slipped the Wycombe challenge and lofted a beautiful shot into the net.

Tom Johnstone should have made it two on the hour when Atkins outpaced Phil Wood and sent over a low cross which eluded Raine, but Johnstone, charging down on the goal just failed to connect and put the ball into an open net.

Wycombe had another let-off in the 76th minute when a fierce drive from the foot of Roger Grimmond beat Raine but passed just inches over the Wycombe bar.

And five minutes from full time only the bravery of Laurie Cole prevented Steve Perrin from wrapping the game up.

Tom Johnstone's backpass lacked the power to carry it through the mud making it easy prey for Perrin but just as he seemed certain to score, Laurie Cole dived at his feet to force the match into extra time.

It was here that the superior fitness of the Wycombe players overcame the superb battling spirit of Chesham United, but the margin between these two sides was far less than the scoreline appears to indicate.

## UNMARKED

But Wycombe were unable to break the Chesham defence down for another ten minutes. Young Phil Sewell gave an admirable example of the coolness he had maintained all afternoon when, in the tenth minute Dylan Evans slipped a ball through the Chesham defence, which eluded Cole, for Tony Horseman, but Sewell got there first and resisted the temptation to pass back or kick it out of play, to coolly slip it past the experienced campaigner and clear his lines.

But they were unable to do much about Steve Perrin's goal two minutes later. Larry Pritchard combined with Tony Horseman who, instead of turning and running with the ball, flicked it across for the unmarked Perrin to slam home.

Minutes later Tom Johnstone nearly put the ball into his own net as he rushed back to clear a cross with the Chesham defence under considerable pressure.

And in the 111th minute Dylan Evans completely crushed any hopes of a Chesham revival, with the softest of goals. It came just after Phil Wood had nearly levelled the scores for Chesham when he deflected a Bernie Mapp cross just wide of his own posts.

From the corner the ball was cleared upfield for Holifield who quickly slipped it through to Perrin. With only the 'keeper to beat, Perrin shot past the diving Cole only to see the ball stick in the mud just short of the line, but Evans quickly ran through to tap it into an empty net and get his name on the score sheet.